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BI-STATE STORMWATER COMMITTEE  
Corps of Engineers - Urban Studies  
810 Tucker Blvd., North  
St. Louis, MO 63101

JOHN J. PISKULICH  
ENGINEER  
SPECIAL PROJECT ADVISOR

April 26, 1982

Site:	Maline Creek
ID #:	MOD980631162
Break:	2-1
Other:	4-26-82

Mr. John J. Piskulich  
Special Project Advisor  
Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District  
2000 Hampton  
St. Louis, MO 63139

Re: Cleaning Creeks

Dear John:

Our committee tour of the lower and middle Maline Creek on Tuesday, April 6, was most enlightening. The enormity and complexity of stormwater management, compared with sanitary sewage collection and treatment, to date generally has resulted in emphasis only on projects that are high capital cost for new construction, hopefully, to preclude need for future maintenance or emergency repair of seriously aggravated and dangerous situations. The common sense approach you used is refreshing as a sorely needed intermediate-term answer.

An indispensable part of your program is the public relations of announcing locally, in several ways, what you're going to do, letting people know who to call if they have any questions and giving prompt attention to any calls received. I feel P.R. is much more important in stormwater management than for problems with sanitary sewage or flooding (of buildings, etc.).

To me, the effect of the type contracts the District started in 1981 on the lower and middle Maline and Gravois Creeks is innovative because they are based on a practical, extremely cost-effective way to better stormwater management by improving stream conveyance. None of its aspects is a radical new approach; however, the combination as a package of removing localized obstructions which retard flow which would thereby greatly increase turbulence and the danger of spot erosion, along with recognition that the ability of a natural channel to carry water is due not only to the channel cross-section but equally important is reasonable uniformity of conveyance characteristics downstream in an urban area; the complete continuity of remedial work along the thread of the channel are all necessary parts of the successful total project.

Several completely different types of ownerships must be anticipated in each locality. In the past, all too often, nothing was done because of the excuse of not being able to get all of the various responsible owners to agree to the same thing. The District's decision to clean obstructions out of channels, under a single contract regardless of the ownerships of different portions of the ground which those channels cross, is a key decision to get things going.

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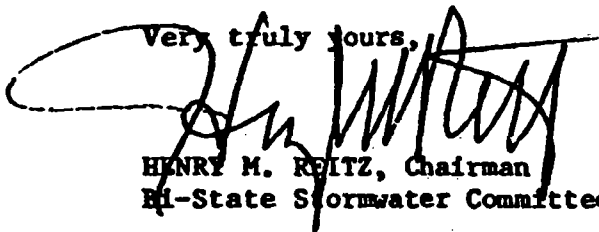
By flush-cutting brush and trees without grubbing or herbicides, you are not trying to kill wooded plant growth. This is sensible because we feel the purpose of what you're doing should be considered as major maintenance.

Also, removing the visual effects of an extended period of neglect (accumulation of trash), we think the psychology of showing that people care about the natural channels, is very helpful and probably synergistic to have people think more than twice about putting trash in the creeks.

Maintenance, in varying degrees, is a necessity for all physical improvement projects. The need for maintenance is as great for stormwater channels as for any type public works. One of the main differences in philosophy between publicly financed and privately financed improvements is the tendency for the publicly financed to try to justify higher capital costs initially, to try to remove the need for periodic maintenance; whereas, usually the characteristics of privately financed projects is to minimize capital costs with the recognition that there's no way maintenance of some degree can be avoided. Usually, the least annual costs result from the philosophy near the private end of this spectrum.

For channels the size of the lower Maline and Gravois Creeks, firm construction costs by competitive bidding on the order of magnitude of \$16,000 a mile, are one of the few bargains we're encountering today. I hope the District and the community and population served appreciate the unusually high benefits we are receiving for the dollars spent in the channel cleaning program that started last year. There are over 500 miles of streams needing this type help.

Very truly yours,



HENRY M. REITZ, Chairman  
Bi-State Stormwater Committee